

Stennis: Interim Report on the Cuban Military Buildup
Preparedness Investigating Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services,
U.S. Senate, May 9 1963

"The responsible agencies of the intelligence community appear to have done a creditable job in gathering and collecting quantities of data and information. The deficiency in the performance of the intelligence community appears to have been in the evaluation and assessment of the accumulated data. Moreover there seems to have been a disinclination on the part of the intelligence community to accept and believe the ominous portent of the information which had been gathered.

In addition, the intelligence people apparently invariably adopted the most optimistic estimate possible with respect to the information available. This is in sharp contrast to the customary military practice of emphasizing the worst situation which might be established by the accumulation of evidence.

There also appeared to be a tendency on the part of the intelligence people to discredit and downgrade refugee and exile reports. This was based on the general lack of experience and training of the refugees and exiles as military observers, their frequent inclusion of items not reasonable credible among those things which were within their power of observation as to time, place and comprehension, and on the consideration of the obvious self-interest of the Cuban sources.

Finally, the intelligence community was of the opinion that the Soviets would not introduce strategic missiles into Cuba because they believed that such a development would be incompatible with Soviet policy as interpreted by them.

A difference between expert and layman in interpretation of "evidence";
expert knows

At PH, just as we stopped the U-2 flights over Cuba, in order to avoid incidents, we stopped all ship traffic over routes northwest of Hawaii, which meant no visual sighting of the approaching Jap convoy.

Who was aware of pattern of Soviet military aid to Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq; wasn't this important in making distinctions as to acceptable aid to Cuba? Did public, Congress realize?

1. Technological surprise (speed of deployment; range of Zeros, shallow torpedos in RH)
2. Cry Wolf phenomenon.
3. wishful thinking
4. ((effect of preconceptions and early results on the collection process))
5. ((commitments in intelligence community on predictions))
6. Sov. deceptive statements.
7. ~~like~~ role of accident, bad luck: weather over Cuba, radio blackout (RH)
political constraints: U-2 shootdowns.
8. Previous Soviet behavior: never in satellites ((SUPPOSE K HAD STARTED BY PUTTING MISSILES IN SATELLITES; AND THAT WE HAD PREDICTED MISSILES IN CUBA))
9. Enemy sec.

Yarmolinsky: 2

What is wanted in the campaign oratory of an incumbent Administration is Wordsworth's recipe for poetry: Emotion recollected in tranquillity.

Intelligence in Crises (i.e., intelligent behavior; learning, adaptation, appropriateness, coordination)

The government has (almost) no memory. (Note resistance to, lack of, studies of operations and crises; gaps and inadequacies of existing studies). Lack of continuity of personnel; continuity of relationships; experienced people drop out of discussion as it goes higher; lack of files, retention of drafts, etc; (Laos)

What experience is likely to be applied at higher levels? The personal experience of the top people? --very short in new administration; this means that vivid experiences of a Sec or Pres are likely to have great influence in shaping new perceptions, regardless of real relevance, and to have impact on a wide range of new choices, while older national experiences are ignored, though more relevant.

Laos: Dominant time lags are involved in the process of forming and considering policy, not in the transmission of messages. When decisions must all be referred back to higher authority: 1) necessary to get the attention of higher authority; delays; 2) committees, consultation, coordination necessary, delays, time-consuming; 3) higher authority must be briefed on background, problem; 4) at the level where "broad considerations" enter, controversy is keen--on goals, facts, policies, and other problems that should be getting attention;

((Is all this true in a "recognized crisis," unlike Laos? (Of course, during crisis, all these problems are accentuated for a "quiet crisis" that may be going on elsewhere.))

Should gov adopt "activist" policy--of sort where delegation is undesired because of "threshold effects" of minor choices, chance of major problems or escalation--so that high-level people must take part in control--when it can be foreseen that situation will not compete effectively, day to day, for the attention of the top level, so that above delays are inevitable?

Perhaps adoption of activist policy could be predicated on the availability, at the time, of a person whom higher authorities are willing to entrust with delegated authority. (e.g., Ambassador; Asst Sec).

On Photos:

Patterns of impact, inference, interpretation:

- a) Negative evidence weighed (too?) strongly: Sept 5, 1962; note similarity of DIA reaction to negative evidence of removal of missiles, (and absence of positive evidence--because no flights), 29 Oct--1 Nov; Missile gap, 1958-1961 (e.g., MRBMs); (when this was a secret, it was a confidence, on language, on the fact that it was a secret)
- b) Given early, positive evidence: tendency to assume that situation will not change drastically or quickly; Sept 5, 62; Sept, 1961 (underestimated speed of introduction of SS-7, hardening, rate of introduction);

c) tendency (?) to "wait till the--"hard"--evidence is in"...before drawing conclusions, doing contingency planning, scheduling meetings

(despite the fact that there may be long "accidental" delays in acquiring hard evidence; by the way, are these delays themselves regarded as if they were evidence ("We still have no evidence of...latest evidence still so

Speech

Reasons for Explains phenomenon:

- a) breakdown of Pres. by importance of issues
- b) Need for fast, good counsel
 - i) Control of news

But need more middle stuffs, cut out? Excommunication
- c) Speed
- d) Impaired = inadequacy of staff planning
(some disunity, expressing loss of confidence)
- e) Need for recovery from opponent; (allies)
- f) Failures. Need to minimize vulnerability to
domestic opposition, — at least in hesitation, rationale,
if not action.
- g) Place of publicity; need to conceal decision
process; alternatives considered. (consideration
the feasibility, possible effectiveness, of rejected alternatives,
suggestion of times as possibilities). Need to avoid creation
of dead-ends; overstimulation of motives, etc.
since J.

i) Pres. (U.S.) prestige as central issue

Differences in level of participation, & loss of influence
National assets, national identity, etc.

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1. Behavior of key individuals in large bureaucracies.
2. The psychology of secrecy; strains imposed by requirement for secrecy.
3. Role of emotions, anxieties, personal risks in organizational behavior.
4. Need for improved prediction--even if only tiny improvement--of opposing initiatives, expectations, interpretation/inferences, responses. And this requires better prediction of our own behavior--and the patterns it presents to an observer.
5. What constitutes "dangerous provocation"--what puts intolerable pressure for hostile countermove on opponent--or us? Nature of "political pain," humiliation, threat...

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